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## LONG-TIME PLANS FOR HOME IMPROVEMENT

A radio talk by S. P. Lyle, Bureau of Agricultural Engineering, broadcast Thursday, January 7, 1937, in the Home Demonstration Radio Program, National Farm and Home Hour, by 52 stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company.

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The desire for home improvement is one of the deep-seated longings of most people. It begins in childhood and continues throughout life. Gardening is a beautiful expression of this inclination to make the home a pleasant place to live.

A child takes pride in his parents' home and is pleased when his companions are favorably impressed. He is especially gratified if his own room appeals to the taste of others. Perhaps I should have remarked that she is especially pleased, since a girl's room is more apt to display good taste in decoration and furnishing, but remember that the collection of scout lore, biological specimens, and electrical and mechanical contraptions which transform a boy's room into a museum or laboratory are expressions of his idea of improvement.

The urge of young folks of the 'teen age to improve personal appearance is accompanied by efforts at improving home surroundings also. Many home improvements are planned by parents primarily to provide the surroundings which will satisfy the needs and desires of their children. Home improvement for social purposes is desired by all members of the family, so the wishes of the growing children for a home to which they may invite their friends is anticipated by the parents and serves the needs of the entire household, not only for the entertainment of visitors, but also for relaxation and sociability in the family circle.

Planning a house either for new construction or remodeling may well be centered about the ideal of a congenial, sociable family unit. This might suggest providing for the peculiar hobbies or tastes of the individuals, with perhaps some unhappy compromises resulting in poor arrangement or a displeasing exterior appearance. Such planning is piece-meal, usually unsatisfactory, and always costly in terms of value received for money expended.

To build a house about a sociable family unit we should think of the house also as a unit, considering first and foremost those conditions which all members of the family desire in a house, such as comfort in winter and summer; healthfulness; convenience; modernization; good food well served, through adequate provision of dining, cooking, and food storage facilities; a pleasing appearance architecturally, - exterior, interior, landscaping, decorations and furnishings. Harmony in planning brings a sense of satisfaction and pride to all members of the family. The future is considered as well as the present. Such a home will serve a happy household for a generation or more.

Planning satisfactory results in building or remodeling farm homes is possible as is evident from the many satisfactory homes to be found on farms.

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There are, of course, many other farm homes not well-planned and the same may be said of urban homes. It seems that it would be nice to buy homes as we buy automobiles, ready-made to high standards of beauty, convenience, and economy, and no doubt many people in cities have better homes than they might otherwise have because builders have produced houses on a quantity basis, but the best results in house-planning are not achieved that way in either the city or the country.

The factors which contribute most to successful long-time plans for home improvement are a combination of family experience and judgment in counsel with an architect who has studied the special requirements and possibilities of farm family living. Architectural service has just as real a value in construction as the necessary labor and materials. Architectural costs for planning and supervision of construction are often approximately the same as one year's interest on the building costs; in other words, less than the annual cost of owning your house. On such terms can farm families afford to dispense with architectural service where it is available?

Unfortunately, such service is not available in all farm localities, hence the members of the farm family should become better informed on all aspects of home improvement from the sources that are readily available. Many farmers' bulletins of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and bulletins of the various State extension services give information about practically every feature of home improvement in which you may be interested. The Bureau of Agricultural Engineering in cooperation with the agricultural extension services is furnishing suggestions for farm house planning and remodeling.

Ask your county agricultural and home demonstration agents for further information about the bulletins and building plans, or write to the Agricultural Extension Service in your State.